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The Urban Link

Newsletter of the Institute of Urban Studies http://ius.uwinnipeg.ca

Director's Note

Dr. Jino Distasio, Acting Director

IUS Releases Report on Single-Room Occupancy Hotels

SRO Hotels house hundreds of Winnipeggers, but with none of the benefits and protection of renting

For many Winnipeggers, home is a 10' by 10' hotel room in the downtown of Winnipeg. Within this 100 square foot space, some 1000 people have called "the Main Street strip" home for more than a decade. In some ways, these persons have essentially been hidden from mainstream society — in cramped hotel rooms, isolated, and ignored by the vast majority of Winnipeggers. While it is common to refer to "hidden homelessness", SRO tenants are, in effect, "the hidden housed." In a report released this month by the Institute of Urban Studies and funded by the Winnipeg Inner City Research Alliance, we examine SRO Hotels and how they might be improved. Drawing on fieldwork in Winnipeg and Los Angeles, the report offers ten key recommendations.

Over a two-year period I came to learn more about life in this marginal form of housing. It is a place that many have not visited, nor "dropped by" to any great extent. What I observed was a street and an area in need of a greater understanding. To me it became a place of contradictions, of good mixed with bad and shards of home contrasted by a sense of dislocation and abandonment.

From the vantage point of a researcher, I observed a segment of the population who do not earn enough to afford the rents being charged or to feed themselves. For those living on government assistance, they have been asked to find a place to live for $236 a month, an amount that barely provides space to breathe. In return for this payment, these persons are given no rights, are afforded limited support, and scrape by day-to-day and hour-by-hour. It is a cycle that often involves fuelling the burgeoning industry of poverty, of reliance on soup kitchens, missions, and shelters.

Director's Note continues on page 2...

IN THIS ISSUE

Director's Note	1
Work on Recent Projects	2
What's New at IUS?	3
Canada Research Chair in Urban Change and Adaptation	5
Spence Street Redevelopment	6
IUS Library	7
Canadian Journal of Urban Research	8
Winnipeg Inner-city Research Alliance	9
CU Expo	10
Download Free Publications	11

The Urban Link is published by the Institute of Urban Studies. The newsletter serves as a forum for community organizations and other individuals to express views and relay information about urban issues related to the City of Winnipeg and other Canadian cities. The newsletter also disseminates information about the Institute of Urban Studies and major initiatives housed at the Institute. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent those held by the Institute of Urban Studies or the University of Winnipeg. The Urban Link is co-edited by Michael Dudley and Michelle Swanson. Contributions are welcomed on an ongoing basis. Please contact Michael Dudley at (204) 982-1140 or m.dudley@uwinnipeg.ca.
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Director's Note ...cont'd from page 1

When provincial officials are pressed about this, the standard response has been that "if we give them more it will only end up in the pockets of greedy owners." True, some may profit from an increase in the shelter allowance, but is this such a bad idea? Is profit a bad word when one houses those most in need, those who have fallen through the cracks? Perhaps some owners might be able themselves to enjoy some breathing room and be able to reinvest in buildings that, in some cases, are over 100 years old.

In walking through the halls of these places and meeting people, it was clear that some residents had better coping skills than others. Some had also been dumped into the area by various agencies that are, much like their clientele, strapped for resources. From interviews with residents it appeared that local hospitals have routinely used downtown hotels as a place to discharge patients when no other options were available.

But within the halls of many hotels live the "working poor," people who earn a wage but through either choice — or lack thereof — reside in a small room. Some appear to thrive in this environment, creating a place that is their own. Others, living in fear, not only lock their doors at night but wedge chairs precariously under doorknobs for safety.

When we talk about the ongoing revitalization efforts in the Exchange or the Waterfront districts, we tend to forget that these 1000 people share these same streets, walk the same sidewalks and, in fact, have the same dreams as do the rest of us: to simply live in a dignified manner in a society that cares about them and their welfare. We cannot, as a city, forget them any longer. Policies need to change to afford all persons in need of housing with a decent place to live. Hotels can play a role in providing affordable housing, but hotel owners need access to better funding. In the end, a small 10' by 10' room can provide a good home; but if SRO Hotels are to be relied upon as a legitimate housing option, policymakers need to ensure that they are the best option possible.

It is now time to take up the challenge and seek out new ways to give people a place to live that is clean, comfortable, safe and affordable.

To download a free copy of Beyond a Front Desk: The Residential Hotel as Home, go to http://ius.uwinnipeg.ca/wira_publications.html

Work on Recent Projects

An Examination of Hidden Homelessness Among First Nations, Métis & Inuit Peoples in Prairie Cities

Work at IUS over the last three months has involved significant consultation with the Aboriginal community in prairie cities. Preliminary efforts have included developing working relationships with key agencies and groups, finalizing the composition of the working group, and establishing a presence in Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Edmonton. Further work has been conducted with respect to reviewing the relevant literature by placing a strong emphasis on seeking knowledge of, and potentially, drawing from an Aboriginal methodological perspective. A further strength of the preliminary work has been to ensure a grassroots representation on the working group through the enlistment of residents from the local Aboriginal community. This has resulted in tremendous success with respect to ensuring this research progresses in a manner that celebrates Aboriginal culture and diversity, by learning, listening and sharing knowledge.

Work on Recent Projects ...continues on page 3

Work on Recent Projects ...cont'd from page 2

A final component of the work to date has been the formation of an interview team. These discussions resulted in the identification of four areas of interest that will be used in the final survey template and include:

- a lack of affordable housing;
- a lack of support networks;
- a lack of information for new arrivals to urban centres;
- institutional discrimination.

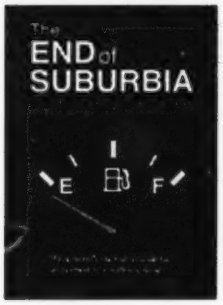
Neighbourhoods Alive! Evaluation

Since 2001, the Province of Manitoba's "Neighbourhoods Alive!" program has been active in 5 Winnipeg neighbourhoods as well as Brandon and Thompson. Neighbourhoods Alive! (NA!)

> "...help[s] neighbourhoods organize, develop a community plan, undertake and co-ordinate neighbourhood supported projects for the revitalization of the community. Neighbourhoods Alive! provides financial support to projects to which the neighbourhood can contribute cash from other sources, labour, materials, services or other in-kind support. Neighbourhoods Alive! also links neighbourhood-identified priorities with a variety of existing public sector services and programs." (from http://www.gov.mb.ca/ia/programs/neighbourhoods/faqs.html#1)

The Institute of Urban Studies is currently researching data in these neighbourhoods, Brandon and Thompson, and is relating these to a set of relevant neighbourhood indicators. The goal is to determine what trends may be identified in these locations and demonstrate the effectiveness of the community-based revitalization model through which NA! operates. The estimated end date for this project is April 30th.

What's New at IUS



The End of Suburbia: Oil Depletion and the Collapse of the American Dream

On February 3, 2005 the Institute of Urban Studies hosted a free screening of the Canadian documentary The End of Suburbia: Oil Depletion and the Collapse of the American Dream. The screening, at Eckhardt-Gramatte Hall, was a roaring success! It was standing room only with over 200 people in attendance. Donations of non-perishable food items were collected for Winnipeg Harvest.

The End of Suburbia provides the historical background to the development of North America's suburbs and examines what Peak Oil and an energy crisis means for our urban centers and sprawl. ("Peak Oil" refers to the geologic and financial limitations that will mean the end of cheap fuels in the near future). Hosted by Barrie Zwicker, the film features interviews with James Howard Kunstler, Peter Calthorpe, Richard Heinberg, Matthew Simmons, and Michael C. Ruppert.

The success of the screening has ensured its return in March 2005 for the Quest North series at the University of Winnipeg. For more information, please contact Molly Johnson at 982-1146 or email m.johnson@uwinnipeg.ca. The End of Suburbia website is www.endofsuburbia.com

A copy of the DVD has been purchased for the IUS library.

What's New at IUS ...continues on page 4

What's New at IUS ...cont'd from page 3

Institute of Urban Studies (IUS) Student Paper Award Winner 2004

Women in the City by Sarah A. Allentuck

IUS is pleased to announce that Sarah A. Allentuck is the recipient of the IUS 2004 Student Paper Award. In her paper entitled Women in the City the author explores the relationship between disadvantaged women and city planning. She focuses on the challenges women face in the areas of housing, transportation, childcare and safety.

The Institute of Urban Studies Blog!

http://blog.uwinnipeg.ca/ius/

The Institute of Urban Studies Blog is your gateway into up-to-the-moment commentary, news, events and Internet resources concerning urban issues, be they local or global. It is also a forum for discussion: each news story or editorial allows you to provide feedback. So please join the discussion and be a part of our online community!

Teaching

Dr. Jino Distasio, and Research Associates Michael Dudley and Molly Johnson have been team-teaching an undergraduate seminar class, **Winnipeg and the Environment: A Case Study Approach** (84.3603), for the **Department of Urban and Environmental Studies at the University of Winnipeg**. The course aims to familiarize students with current environmental issues such as water quality, food security, land use, and climate change and apply them to a local context. Through a series of assignments, such as writing briefs, conducting interviews with local environmental organizations, delivering presentations, and analysis of current policy & planning documents, the students are developing practical skills for the workplace or graduate programs. Guest lecturers from the three levels of government introduced students to the roles, responsibilities and structure of each organization and their connection with environmental issues.

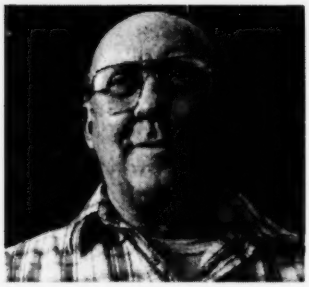
Molly Johnson was the studio instructor for the **Community Planning and Urban Design Studio in the Department of City Planning at the University of Manitoba** in the Autumn 2004 term. The studio focused on Osborne Village. Students' work included comparing the Village to adjoining neighbourhods, such as Broadway-Assiniboine and Lord Roberts, developing design guidelines for two vacant lots at River Avenue and Scott Street, and creating planning and design websites for the community.

Michael Dudley has been teaching at the **University of Manitoba**. In the fall of 2004 he taught **Environment & Behaviour**, a core theory course in the **Environmental Design** department with an enrollment of 100 students. This course introduces students to the psychological implications of designed and natural environments. At present he is teaching **History of the City**, a seminar course which is required for ED students taking the City Planning option.

Katie Anderson, Student Assistant for the WIRA CU Expo Conference

Katie is an Environmental and urban studies student at the University of Winnipeg who will be graduating this June. She is fascinated with the politics and planning of cities, and hopes to continue on with Master's in Urban Planning. She will likely focus on Alternative Transportation Planning; as she loves to ride the bus, walk downtown and ride her bike wherever it will take her, she is excited to have discovered a career path which she can carry out in her everyday work and life.

Canada Research Chair in Urban Change and Adaptation



Canada Research Chair Report

Tom Carter and Chesya Polevychok completed a housing policy paper entitled Housing Is Good Social Policy for the Canadian Policy Research Network (CPRN). The paper emphasizes the need for increased housing assistance for low-income households and better integration of housing policy with other social and economic policy initiatives. The paper, which is available on the CPRN website at http://www.cprn.org has been used extensively during the recent National Housing Consultation on development of a broader national housing strategy.

Tom Carter participated in the National Housing Consultation attending meetings in Vancouver and Ottawa and prepared a paper on Delivery Models required to deliver a broader range of programs as part of a national housing strategy. The paper is available under Canada Research Chair at http://ius.uwinnipeg.ca

Research highlights

Since the last newsletter three new research highlights have been added to the website entitled

- Dwelling Changes in the Inner City 1971 - 2001
- Poverty Changes in the Inner City 1981 - 2001
- Canada's Major Metropolitan Centres: A Comparison

A set of maps, prepared by Kurt Sargent, Research Assistant, has also been provided on the website. These maps portray changes in certain urban indicators including education, income, poverty, tenure and population change among others. The maps portray neighbourhood change since 1971 or 1981 depending on the indicator.

Chesya, Kurt and Tom have also completed two reports for the Federation of Canadian Municipalities:

"Scoping" Research On Issues For Municipal Governments And Aboriginal People Living Within Their Boundaries

Literature Review on Needs and Issues of Aboriginal People

The literature review is located on the website.

Tom has recently returned from Kampala Uganda, where he has been working with the City of Winnipeg, the City of Kampala, the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and various community organizations in Kampala on an HIV/AIDS project. The purpose of the initiative is to strengthen local government involvement and local government processes in working with community groups to address the HIV/AIDS problem. The project will also develop a community needs assessment template and process to identify needs and service gaps at the Parish and Village level in Kampala. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the Canadian International Development Association fund the project.

Please visit the website for further information.

http://ius.uwinnipeg.ca/
Canada Research Chair in Urban Change and Adaptation

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Institute of Urban Studies
The University of Winnipeg

Spence Street Redevelopment

The University of Winnipeg, Spence Neighbourhood and other stakeholders examine potential for closing part of Spence Street to create a new public space and a transit loop.

By David Northcott

The Spence neighbourhood is among the top ten poorest communities in Canada, and many of its residents have for too long shouldered the multiple burdens of poverty, inadequate shelter, and crime. However, the Spence community and the University of Winnipeg have in recent years been active partners in improving the neighbourhood. Growth, stability and reclaimed housing are leading examples of a community recovering its identity.

The proposal to close off Spence Street between Portage and Ellice and create new office and public space for the University and the community is part of this journey. The defining central campus block on Spence Street has been the focus of a development plan to respond to both pressing on-campus needs (such as classroom space, student housing) and needs of the community (like multi-use housing, safety, security and community-influenced revitalization).

Recently the Spence Street project took the form of many individual meetings and coffee gatherings in the neighbourhood — 106 took place during November and December alone. This led to the development of survey tools and then to a IUS-supported community planning forums. These forums were held in four sites (Magnus Eliason Recreation Centre, St. Matthews church, Crossways in Common and Knox United church) in order to give as many people as possible an opportunity to have direct access to the planning process. The consultation resulted in a lot of good ideas and healthy debate. After collecting the ideas and input, the University of Winnipeg / Spence working group reviewed the needs and data, which are being used to build the draft concept design. (For more information on the model that has helped guide the community process to date, please see The Community Planning Handbook by Nick Waters, available in the IUS library).

The next step in the process is in the hands of the granting bodies in government. Once the dollars are committed, the design journey will continue with community-based design charettes, creating the plans, contracting of services and constructing the building.

The University of Winnipeg and the Spence Neighbourhood are together for the long term. These relationships will continue to develop and are the heart of healthy development in the area.

IUS Library

Library News

The Institute's library has for many years been the depository for official files relating to two major initiatives in Winnipeg's history: the *Core Area Initiative* (1981-1991) and the *City of Winnipeg Act Review* (1984-86). In the Core Area Initiative files one can find a wide range of printed materials, including reports, magazine articles and a decade's worth of newspaper clippings from the Winnipeg Free Press, the Winnipeg Sun and other publications, organized by month. *The City of Winnipeg Act Review* files contain official submissions, reports, and transcripts of public hearings. Citations to both of these file collections have now been added to the University of Winnipeg's online catalogue.

Staffing

We are pleased to welcome Karina Cardona-Claros as the new student assistant at the IUS library. Karina is completing her degree in Urban Studies and is interested in pursuing further studies in Environmental Policy and Management.

New books on order:

The City in History by Lewis Mumford

Brave New Neighbourhoods: The Privatization of Public Space by Margaret Kohn

Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found by Suketu Mehta

Identity, Place, Knowledge: Social Movements Contesting Globalization by Janet Conway

Metropolis Now! Urban Cultures in Global Cities edited by Ramesh Kumar Biswas

Place Matters: Metropolitics for the 21st Century by Peter Dreier

"Real" Indians and Others: Mixed Blood Urban Native Peoples and Indigenous Nationhood by Bonita Lawrence

The Cybercities Reader edited by Stephen Graham

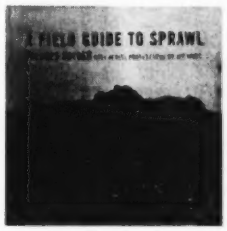
The New Urban Sociology by Mark Gottdiener

Classic Readings in Urban Planning by Jay M. Stein

IUS Library Hours
Mon to Fri, 8:30am to 4:30pm.
Suite 103-520 Portage Avenue

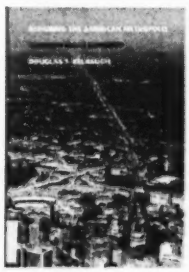
From the Shelves– New at the IUS Library

A Field Guide to Sprawl
Dolores Hayden
New York: W.W. Norton, 2004.



Dolores Hayden, author of *Redesigning the American Dream* (2002) and *Building Suburbia* (2003) has compiled an illustrated "devil's dictionary" of the contemporary suburban landscape. Aerial photos by Jim Wark accompany definitions of new urban terms such as zoomburb, tower farm, and big box.

Repairing the American Metropolis: Common Place Revisited
Douglas S. Kelbaugh
Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002.



Based on his 1997 book *Common Place: Toward Neighbourhood and Regional Design*, Kelbaugh's new book provides an updated guide on how to plan and design the built environment. Kelbaugh addresses Suburban Sprawl, Critical Regionalism, Typology, New Urbanism and Public Policy.

Urban Planning in a Changing World: The Twentieth Century Experience
Robert Freestone, Ed.
London, E&FN Spon, 2000.

As part of the Studies in History, Planning and the Environment series edited by Professor Anthony Sutcliffe, this book covers topics such as 'The Neighbourhood Paradigm,' 'Motor Vehicles and the Inner City' and 'Global City Regions: Planning and Policy Dilemnas in a Neo-Liberal World.' Contributors to this volume include Sir Pete: Hall and Raphael Fischler.

COPIES NOW AVAILABLE!

CANADIAN JOURNAL OF URBAN RESEARCH

Revue canadienne de recherche urbaine

Volume 13, Issue 2, Winter 2004

CONTENTS

Articles

Talk, Money And Institutional Design: Comparing Urban Policy Prospects In Toronto Versus London
Sylvia Bashevkin

Non-market Housing Models In Ontario: A Stakeholder Analysis
Jorge Sousa and Jack Quarter

First Nations Urban Migration And The Importance Of "Urban Nomads" In Canadian Plains Cities: A Perspective From The Streets
Paul G. Letkemann

Toward Sustainable Transportation: Exploring Transportation Decision Making In Teleworking Households In A Mid-Sized Canadian City
Jean C. Andrey, Kyle R. Burns and Sean T. Doherty

Discourses And Experiences Of Social Mix In Gentrifying Neighbourhoods: A Montréal Case Study
Damaris Rose

Collective Action In Local Development: The Case Of Angus Technopole In Montréal
Jean-Marc Fontan, Juan-Luis Klein and Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay

Research Notes

Criteria For Best Practices In Building Child-Friendly Cities: Involving Young People In Urban Planning And Design
Rae Bridgman

The Homelessness Individuals And Families Information System: A Case Study In Canadian Capacity Building
Tracy Peressini and John Engeland

Géographie, Espace Social et Communauté Floribécoise
Rémy Tremblay

Book Reviews

Books Received

Canadian Journal of Urban Research

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A multi-disciplinary, academic journal dedicated to publishing refereed, scholarly articles that address a wide range of issues relevant to the field of Urban Studies.

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Winnipeg Inner-City Research Alliance (WIRA)

Updates on Community-based Research

By Anita Friesen, Community Liaison Director

NEW WIRA RESEARCH REPORTS

The following reports are now available on the WIRA website:

- **Beyond a Front Desk: The Residential Hotel as Home**
  By Jino Distasio, Susan Mulligan, Constable Gerard Allard, Mike Maunder
- **Shared Responsibility: Building Healthy Communities In Winnipeg's North End**
  By Jason Brown, Nancy Higgitt, Susan Wingert, and Christine Miller with Mary Williams and Larry Morrissette and North End Housing Project
- **Housing For Assisted Living In Inner-City Winnipeg: A Social Analysis Of Housing Options For People With Disabilities**
  By Michelle Owen and Colleen Watters
- **Finding Our Way Home: Housing Options In Inner City Winnipeg For People With Disabilities Who Are Dying**
  By Deborah Stienstra and Rhonda Wiebe
- **Cooperative Business Development: Winnipeg Pilot Project Summative Evaluation Report**
  Research Administrator: Jared Carlberg
  Contributing Author: Neil Loughran
  Contributing Author: Russ Rothney
- **Mentoring Inner City Youth In Transition To Inependent Living** *By Ken McCluskey (University of Winnipeg), Loretta Doyle (Winnipeg Child and Family Services), John Franklin (University of Winnipeg), Wendy Josephson (University of Winnipeg), Ellen Peel (Winnipeg Child and Family Services), Michael Weinrath (University of Winnipeg)*
- **Male Reading Teachers: Effects On Inner-City Boys**
  By Laura Sokal, Herb Katz, Anastasia Sych-Yereniuk And Lori Chochinov-Harder, Matthew Adkins, Tannis Grills, Crystal Stewart, Greg Priddle

RESEARCH PROJECTS RECENTLY APPROVED AND NOW UNDERWAY

Transitional Housing for Aboriginal Ex-Offenders in the Inner City
Principal Investigator: Jason Brown, *Family Social Sciences, University of Manitoba*
Co-Investigators: Nancy Higgitt, *Family Social Sciences, University of Manitoba*
Susan Wingert, *Department of Sociology, University of Western Ontario*
Dilly Knol, *Andrews Street Family Centre*

Routine Activities, Opportunity and Crime in the Inner City: Investigating the Link Between Monthly Income Assistance Payments and Crime in Winnipeg
Principal Investigator: Steven A. Kohm, *Criminal Justice Studies, University of Winnipeg*
Co-Investigators: Gerard Allard, *Winnipeg Police Service*
Greg Kaatz, *Winnipeg Police Service*

Living on Furby: The Life and Times of an Inner City Block
Principal Investigator: David Burley, History, *University of Winnipeg*
Co-Investigator: *Westminster Housing*

For details about WIRA research projects, visit:
http://ius.uwinnipeg.ca/wira_research_projects

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WIRA TO HOST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE!

CUexpo 2005

Community-University Research Partnerships: Leaders in Urban Change

September 15-18th, 2005 | Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada | Delta Hotel, downtown Winnipeg

Community-university research leads to practical results for communities, and positive change for program delivery and policy. The overall goal of CUexpo2005 is to build a more complete understanding of the challenges and benefits of community-based research. This conference will be an honest, in-depth exploration of community-university research partnerships, with a focus on declining urban settings.

CALL FOR CONFERENCE SESSION PROPOSALS

Session proposals will be accepted until April 29th, 2005.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS CONFIRMED

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Early registration begins April 1st, 2005

CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

FIELDTRIPS

For details, visit the conference website: http://cuexpo.uwinnipeg.ca/

Institute of Urban Studies
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Visit IUS Publications

New Releases

http://ius.uwinnipeg.ca/publications_new_releases.html

Spence Redevelopment Project Community Consultation Discussion Paper

The Spence Redevelopment Project Discussion paper highlights the findings of 150 interviews and four community forums held in the Spence, West Broadway and Central Park neighbourhoods. The intent of the discussions was to seek the thoughts and advice of the surrounding community with respect to the University's proposed development of Spence Street.

Visit IUS Publications

http://ius.uwinnipeg.ca/publications_browse_archive.html#

Browse Archives Student Paper Series

Women In The City
By Sarah A. Allentuck

That many women experience disadvantage in urban areas is, to some extent, due to misconceptions and false assumptions regarding their needs on the part of the city planning profession. The author explores some of the negative consequences of city planning as they affect women — economically disadvantaged women in particular. Concentration is placed on the historical causes of, and possible solutions to, inequities in housing, transportation, childcare and safety. Examples of Winnipeg are cited.

Visit WIRA Publications

http://ius.uwinnipeg.ca/wira_publications.html

Shared Responsibility: Building Healthy Communities in Winnipeg's North End
By Jason Brown, Nancy Higgitt, Susan Wingert, and Christine Miller with Mary Williams and Larry Morrissette and North End Housing Project

This project was a partnership between academics at the University of Manitoba, Department of Family Social Sciences and the North End Housing Project. Our study explored the perceptions of inner-city residents and service providers to represent their ideas about building healthy communities. We found that there is a range of issues associated with the lack of affordable housing within inner-city neighbourhoods that are rich in social capital.